

and our grandchildren and future generations? We are delaying tough choices and we are pushing reality down the road here. Much of this assistance goes to subsidizing States. Some States, like Nebraska, have thus far managed their budgets responsibly, even in tough times. I won't ask Nebraskans to pay for poor governance elsewhere.

Mr. Chair, I don't want to give a speech simply to oppose. There are some important, new bold ideas here, such as alternative energy for a sustainable energy future, a modern electrical grid and health information technology. But the entirety of the package puts us on a path of aggressive spending, in the name of stimulus, that will be nearly impossible to reverse.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I ask that the balance of our time be managed by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. ALTMIRE). Without objection, the gentleman from New Jersey will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Last year, 2.6 million jobs were lost, and on Monday alone four American companies announced that they were laying off 37,000 employees. When workers lose their jobs, many also lose their health insurance. And for those lucky enough to keep their coverage, many end up delaying medical care because they choose to use their limited resources on groceries and other basic necessities. These families need help, and they will get it from this economic recovery package.

This bill makes important improvements to COBRA coverage so it is more affordable for workers who have been laid off. In addition, for those workers who have lost their job but are not eligible for COBRA coverage, the bill creates a new temporary Medicaid option that will be paid for entirely by the Federal Government. Combined, these provisions will help provide health coverage to over 8 million Americans over the next year.

In addition, this bill will provide States with urgent fiscal relief. Right now, almost every State is experiencing a budget crisis. Governors are struggling to find ways to close these budget gaps, and many governors are starting to look at scaling back on their Medicaid programs, just as more and more people are in need of Medicaid services.

This bill provides critical financial assistance so States are not forced to scale back their Medicaid programs and can continue to serve those in need.

We also make a significant investment in our economic future by investing \$20 billion to help doctors and hospitals acquire and use health information technology. For years we have all been talking about the need to modernize our health care system, and this bill finally provides the means to do so.

Not only does this legislation invest in our economy today, but it also makes our health care system safer and more efficient for years to come.

The recovery package answers the pleas from economists who said that we must act quickly and boldly, and it certainly deserves bipartisan support.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished ranking member for yielding me this time, and I do rise, unfortunately, in opposition to H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the so-called stimulus package.

Mr. Chairman, we spent 12 hours in the Energy and Commerce Committee marking our portion of this bill up last week, and a few, a very few Republican amendments were approved and summarily stripped out as we see this new bill before us today.

But it is not really process that is my objection, it is just that I have a great fear that instead of throwing water on a fire, as it has been described, this economic problem that we have, we are about to throw kerosene on the fire and make the matter a lot worse. We tried to explain that to President Obama when he visited our conference today, and we want him to show some changes in the bill that we Republicans can accept, like more tax breaks for small businesses and entrepreneurs who create jobs.

I regretfully oppose the bill.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Chairman, we are not launching just a stimulus package here, we are launching a new, clean energy rocket. We know how to launch revolutions in technology. We did it in the original Apollo project that started right in this Chamber when John F. Kennedy launched that project standing right behind me. In this bill today, we are launching a similarly ambitious and similarly important clean energy revolution.

The reason I say that is the next few years, when hundreds of people go to work building lithium-ion batteries for our advanced electric cars, like at the A123 Battery Company in Massachusetts, it is because of this bill. When hundreds of people go to work doing advanced photovoltaic panels, like at Nanosolar, a thin-film photovoltaic company in California, it is going to be because of this bill. When hundreds of people go to work making gasoline out of algae, like they are doing in the deserts of Nevada, it is because of this bill. We are launching a rocket, a revolution, today.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to

the gentleman from California (Mr. NUNES), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. NUNES. Mr. Chairman, the significance of what we face can only be described as a generational challenge. Many of my colleagues seem to believe that the only solution is to spend enormous amounts of taxpayer money.

First we are told that we had to spend \$700 billion to bail out Wall Street. Then we were told that, despite the bailout's failure, we needed another \$350 billion. And now this Congress is told to approve nearly \$1 trillion in a taxpayer-funded giveaway.

Mr. Chairman, perhaps it is time to remind my colleagues that this Nation is already facing unsustainable levels of government spending. Responsible action today is not to spend more, but to reform the way we do business and spend less. The current economic crisis should serve as a warning, a powerful warning to this Congress: face your economic demons, or be crushed by your political cowardice.

For years we have lived on borrowed time. We have continued to throw money at unsustainable and broken programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. These programs must be fixed.

On a more blunt point, our Nation's energy policy is an absolute travesty. To put it simply, our policies are bizarre. We want abundant energy, but we enact policies that do nothing but march us in the opposite direction.

It is time for this Congress to face reality. We should permit more oil development off Alaska and our coastlines. I know this is shocking to hear, but we must also match the leadership of France and produce 80 percent of our electricity from nuclear reactors.

The bottom line is we need jobs. Energy development will create jobs. I can assure you that throwing more and more money at the problem isn't going to solve the crisis. Simply taking action to be seen as doing something is denying reality and is an injustice to the American people.

Tough choices need to be made. While they will not always be popular, nor will they be easy, they are most certainly necessary.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, the chairman of the Environment and Energy Subcommittee, Mr. MARKEY.

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman.

This urgently-needed stimulus bill funds infrastructure projects that are shovel-ready, while also supporting future-oriented projects that are circuit-ready: broadband, electronic medical records, smart grid, advanced battery technologies, and other vital priorities.

This package is a major downpayment on the clean, renewable energy future this country has been waiting for and desperately needs.

But this legislation should not be characterized by what we spend, but